
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	226 Massachusetts Avenue, NE	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	June 23, 2016	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	16-391		Alteration
Staff Reviewer:	Steve Callcott	X	New Construction
			Demolition
			Subdivision

Massachusetts Avenue Properties LLC, with plans prepared by Jane Nelson Architects, seeks conceptual design review for demolition of a non-contributing building and construction of a three-story office building in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property History and Description

226 was constructed in 1958 as a two-story retail and office building; its current façade and gabled roof were added in the 1980s in an effort to provide it with a more traditionally historic 19th century appearance. Based on its date of construction outside the period of significance for the historic district (1791-1945), the building is non-contributing to the historic district.

The building is flanked by a non-contributing eight story office building to the west and a contributing six-story apartment building to the east.

Proposal

The project calls for demolishing the non-contributing building and constructing a three-story office building with a limestone base and enframing wall and a glass curtain wall clad by a series of six curving (glass?) fins. While the building will be only three stories on the interior, the façade would be 50' tall, with a tall first story and enclosing a roof terrace.

Evaluation

The project has been developed to relate to but be distinct from the non-contributing building to which it would be internally connected. The distinction is appropriate given the different size and scale of the two, and also provides a more varied streetscape than if the new construction merely continued the same vocabulary as the existing office building. The height, materials, and abstracted monumental language are compatible for the property's location within the historic district.

As the project continues to be refined, some additional study of the first floor glazing treatment is encouraged. While not containing an entrance, the symmetrical formality of the design and the extent of glazing capped by a projecting canopy suggests that it should; without a prominent door, the base feels somewhat ambiguous. Reducing the extent of

glazing, providing a more solid base to it and/or projecting the glazing out to follow the curve of the canopy might be worthy of study.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Review Board approve the concept as consistent with the purposes of the act, with further development of the first floor treatment and final permit approval delegated to staff.